

REMARKS

Pending claims

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Support for the phrase "wherein the biocompatible salt of the organic multi-acid is sodium, potassium, or ammonium salt" can be found on page 12, lines 11-12. After these amendments are entered, eleven (11) Claims (claims 1-11) are pending.

Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockinger et al. in view of the admitted prior art set forth in instant specification at page 2, line 22 through page 3, line 5 and British Patent 1,177,100. For the following reasons, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

First, Applicants would like to restate that Applicants **do not** state that the prior art teaches the present invention, i.e., stabilizing poly(oxyalkylene)-containing materials" by using a water-soluble and biocompatible organic multi-acid or biocompatible salt thereof.

Second, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion that the term "water-soluble" is interchangeable with the term "sparingly soluble", because "it would be soluble if used in small enough concentrations." The attached document "The MSDS HyperGlossary: Solubility" clearly shows that solubility can be classified into four general classes: (1) soluble; (2) slightly soluble; (3) sparingly soluble; and (4) insoluble. Applicants define in the claims that the salt of the organic multi-acid must be soluble and must not be sparingly soluble. Clearly, according to the general usage of the terms "soluble" and "sparingly soluble" shown in the attached document, a water-soluble and biocompatible salt of citrate definitely cannot be sparingly soluble manganese citrate.

Third, in order to expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicants have amended claim 1 to specify that the biocompatible salt of the organic multi-acid is sodium, potassium, or ammonium salt. The rejection is moot in view of this amendment, because the cited references when combined do not teach or suggest all the claim limitations of the invention.

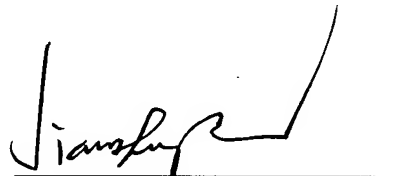
In sum, Applicants respectfully submit that since the cited references when combined still fails to suggest or teach all of the limitations of invention as currently claimed, the Applicant's invention is not obvious. As such, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection over claims 1-11.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing and in conclusion, the Applicant submit that the rejections set-forth in the Office Action have been overcome, and that all pending claims are now in conditions for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that a discussion with Applicants' representative would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned. Please address all correspondence to Robert Gorman, CIBA Vision, Patent Department, 11460 Johns Creek Parkway, Duluth, GA 30097. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fees which may be required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2965.

Respectfully submitted,



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